

CLAIMS

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1. A method of securing a plug (16) in an over-sized preformed hole (20) comprises the steps of: (a) providing at least one piece of a loosely-woven fabric (26 or 30) carrying consolidated thereon a quick-setting filler material (28), which fabric piece (26 or 30) is sized to envelop at least circumferentially the plug (16) intended to be used; (b) enveloping the plug (16) at least circumferentially in the fabric piece (26 or 30); (c) causing activation of the filler material (28) thereby to initiate hardening and eventual setting of the filler material (28); and (d) inserting the enveloped plug (16,26,28) without delay in the oversized hole (20) in a manner such as to ensure filling of the oversized hole (20) with the enveloped plug (16,26,28).

2. A method according to claim 1, wherein the filler material (28) is air activated, and step (c) precedes step (b).

3. A method according to claim 2, wherein the filler material comprises a polyurethane resin.

4. A method according to claim 1, wherein the filler material (28) is water activated, and step (b) precedes step (c).

5. A method according to claim 4, wherein the filler material comprises plaster of Paris.

6. A method according to claim 4, wherein the filler material (28) comprises a quick-setting material manufactured from gypsum, other than plaster of Paris.

7. A method according to any one of the claims 1 to 6, wherein the filler material has mixed in with it short, strength-enhancing fibres of glass, carbon or other

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suitable material.

5 8. A method according to any one of the claims 1 to 7, wherein the fabric piece (26) is in the form of a tape or strip, and is wound on to the plug (16) thereby to envelop it circumferentially.

10 9. A method according to any one of claims 1 to 7, wherein the fabric piece (30) is circular in shape, or substantially so, and is placed over the closed end of the plug (16) and then smoothed longitudinally along the plug (16) to the open end thereof so as to envelop the plug (16) circumferentially in a substantially uniform manner.

15 10. Means for use in practising a method according to any preceding claim, comprising a piece of a loosely-woven fabric (26 or 30) carrying consolidated thereon a quick-setting filler material (28), which fabric piece (26 or 30) is shaped and sized for use with a plug of a particular selected size.

20 11. Means according to claim 10, wherein the the filler material has mixed in with it short, strength-enhancing fibres of glass, carbon or other suitable material.

25 12. Means according to claim 10 for use in a method according to claim 9, wherein the piece of filler-carrying fabric (30) is circular in shape, or substantially so.

30 13. Means according to claim 10 for use in a method according to claim 8, wherein the piece of filler-carrying fabric (26) is rectangular in shape, or substantially so.

35 14. Means for use in practising a method according to any one of the claims 1 to 8, comprising a piece of a loosely-woven fabric (26 or 30) carrying consolidated thereon a quick-setting filler material (28), which fabric piece (26 or 30) is in the form of a tape (34) which is transversely

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weakened at positions (36) spaced along the tape (34) to enable ready detachment of successive pieces (38) as desired for use in practising any of the methods.

5 15. Means according to claim 14, wherein the the filler material has mixed in with it short, strength-enhancing fibres of glass, carbon or other suitable material.

10 16. Means according to claim 14, wherein the tape (34) is wound in the form of a roll (40).

15 17. Means according to claim 14, wherein the tape (34) is folded upon itself at said weakened positions (36) in a fan-fold manner.

20 18. Means according to any one of the claims 10 to 17, wherein the filler-carrying fabric piece or pieces (26,30,38) are enclosed in an enclosure means (32) arranged to prevent premature activation of the filler material.

25 19. Means according to claim 18, wherein the enclosure means (32) incorporates a resealable closure means for enabling withdrawal of individual fabric piece (26,30,38) one at a time.

30 20. Means according to claim 18 or 19, wherein the enclosure means (32) carries within or externally thereon printed instructions setting out the manner of using the fabric pieces.

35 21. A method of securing a screw (14) in an over-sized preformed hole (20) comprising a method according to any one of the claims 1 to 9, and a subsequent step, after the elapse of the requisite filler-hardening time, of inserting the screw (14) in the plug (16) and screwing it home therein, the screw (14) being of a size intended for the size of the plug (16).

22. For use in any one of the methods of claim 1 to 9, a pre-prepared unit (44) comprising a plug (16) carrying around it a sleeve of a loosely-woven fabric having consolidated thereon a quick-setting filler material (28).

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23. A unit according to claim 22, wherein the the filler material has mixed in with it short, strength-enhancing fibres of glass, carbon or other suitable material.

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24. A method according to any one of the claims 1 to 9 and 21, substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to, and as illustrated by, the accompanying diagrammatic drawings.

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25. Means according to any one of the claims 10 to 20, 22 and 23, substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to, and as illustrated by, the accompanying diagrammatic drawings.

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